

the condition of education 2001



INDICATOR 7

Participation in Adult Learning

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2001*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2001*, visit the NCES web site (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2001072>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

Suggested Citation:

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *The Condition of Education 2001*, NCES 2001-072, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2001.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement

Adult Learning

Participation in Adult Learning

Participation in adult learning was higher in 1999 than in 1991. Participation in credential programs declines with age, while participation in other types of activities remains about the same with age.

In an age of rapid technological and economic change, lifelong learning can provide benefits for individuals and for society as a whole. Participation in learning activities increased from 38 percent of those in the population age 18 and above in 1991 to 48 percent in 1999. These learning activities included participation in credential programs, provided either by a postsecondary institution or some other kind of organization, such as an employer; work-related learning other than a credential program; basic skills training; learning English as a Second Language; apprenticeships; and learning for purposes of personal development (see supplemental table 7-1).

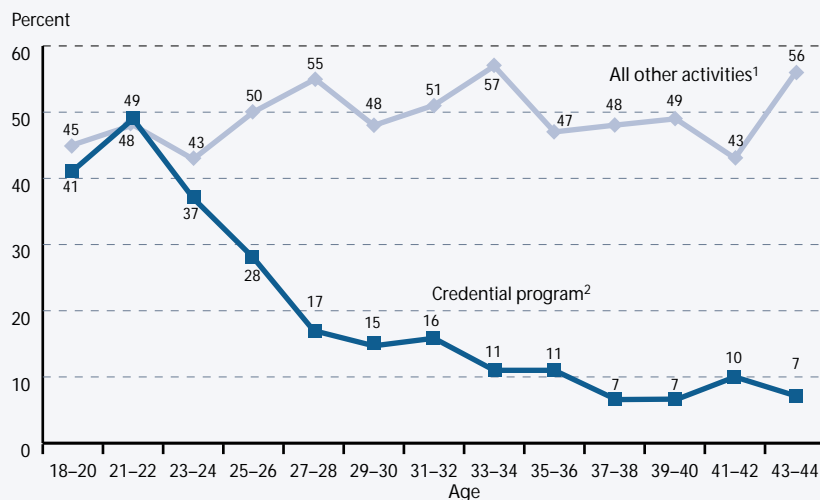
For those ages 18–44, participation in credential programs leading to a degree, certificate, or diploma from a postsecondary institution generally decreased with age in 1999, while participation in all other kinds of adult learning activities remained about the same for all age groups within this age range. At ages 21–22, the percentage of the population who participated in a credential program in a postsecondary institution was about the same

as the percentage who participated in all other types of adult learning. At ages 43–44, 7 percent of adults participated in credential programs in postsecondary institutions, and 56 percent participated in other types of adult learning activities.

Adults obtained their learning from different types of providers. In 1999, among those age 18 and above who participated in credential courses of all kinds, 74 percent took courses from a postsecondary institution, and the rest from a business or other kind of organization. At least half of those age 18 and above who participated in work-related courses took courses given by businesses or professional associations. Among adults who took courses for personal development, private organizations were the most likely providers (48 percent) (see supplemental table 7-2).

In 1999, adults 18 and above with a bachelor's degree were more likely to participate in a learning activity (65 percent) than were high school completers (39 percent) (see supplemental table 7-1).

ADULT LEARNING: Percentage of adults ages 18–44 who participated in credential or other types of learning programs in the past 12 months: 1999



¹Includes participation in apprenticeships, courses for basic skills, personal development, English as a Second Language, work-related courses, and credential programs in organizations other than postsecondary institutions.

²Includes both part- and full-time participation in postsecondary institutions leading to a college degree, diploma, or certificate.

NOTE: Adults may be counted in both categories. Individuals may have participated in both a credential program in a college or university and some other learning activity. Data have been revised from previously published figures.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES), 1999 (Adult Education Survey).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Supplemental Notes 1, 3

Supplemental Tables 7-1, 7-2

NCES 2000–027



Participation in Adult Learning

Table 7-1 Percentage of adults age 18 and above who participated in learning activities in the past 12 months, by educational attainment and age: 1991, 1995, and 1999

Educational attainment and age	1991 Total ¹	1995 Total ¹	1999 Total ¹	Type of adult learning activity ²				
				Basic skills	Credential ³		Work-related	Personal
					Full-time	Part-time		
Total	37.9	44.3	48.1	1.9	6.5	9.3	22.2	22.2
Educational attainment								
Grade 8 or less	8.0	10.9	14.9	4.7	0	0.7	1.6	6.5
Grades 9- 12 ⁴	16.1	23.5	25.8	7.6	1.4	4.7	6.4	10.3
High school diploma or equivalent	26.7	33.0	38.6	1.3	3.9	6.5	16.6	17.6
Some college, including vocational/ technical	52.6	58.7	58.9	0.8	13.9	13.7	24.3	26.1
Bachelor's degree or higher	56.5	62.1	64.8	(⁵)	5.6	11.9	37.7	31.9
Age								
18- 24	69.1	68.3	69.9	8.9	35.0	13.8	16.7	22.5
25- 34	42.2	53.0	60.3	2.2	7.5	15.7	29.7	25.2
35- 44	46.6	51.0	51.7	0.9	2.2	10.6	28.7	25.1
45- 54	33.3	47.0	49.5	0.7	1.7	7.7	27.0	24.6
55- 64	23.0	28.2	35.2	0.4	0.3	4.8	18.9	17.3
65 and above	10.5	15.2	18.7	0.3	0.3	1.2	3.4	14.5

¹ Estimates include participation in basic skills, work-related, credential programs, English as a Second Language, personal interest courses, apprenticeships, or participation in credential program full or part time. Adults who participated in apprenticeships and programs for English as a Second Language are included in the totals but are not shown separately.

² Percentages may not add to totals because individuals may have participated in more than one type of adult learning activity.

³ Includes credential programs provided by either postsecondary institutions or other types of providers.

⁴ In 1995 and 1999, includes adults whose highest education level was grades 9–12 who had not received a high school diploma; in 1991, includes only adults whose highest education level was grades 9–11.

⁵ Only adults who had not received a high school diploma or equivalent, who received a high school diploma in the past 12 months, or who received a high school diploma in a foreign country and did not have a bachelor's degree were asked about their participation in basic education/General Education Development (GED) activities.

NOTE: Data have been revised from previously published figures. See *Supplemental Note 3* for information on the National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES), 1991, 1995, and 1999 (Adult Education Survey).

Table 7-2 Percentage of adults age 18 and above who participated in various learning activities with different providers, by type of activity: 1999

Type of activity and age	Type of provider for various adult learning activities						
	Elementary/ secondary	Post- secondary	Trade organization	Private organization	Business	Government	Other
Credential	1.5	74.0	9.7	1.6	6.7	3.8	2.6
Full-time	0.8	86.6	6.2	1.9	0.7	1.9	1.9
Part-time	2.0	65.3	12.1	1.5	10.9	5.1	3.1
Work-related	4.8	21.7	13.4	6.1	52.5	14.2	4.3
Personal	4.9	15.4	11.9	48.1	19.6	9.8	4.5

NOTE: Information on the type of provider of adult learning activities was aggregated as follows. Elementary/secondary: elementary, junior high school, or high school; postsecondary: 2-year community or junior college, 2-year vocational school, or 4-year college or university; trade organization: private vocational, trade, business, hospital, flight school, or adult learning center; private: private community organization, church or religious organization, tutor, or private instructor; business: business or industry, or professional association; and government: federal, state, county, or local government, or public library. For each type of activity, the percentages shown are based only on adults who participated in that activity. Percentages may add to more than 100.0 because individuals can take more than one work-related or personal-development course. Data have been revised from previously published figures. See *Supplemental Note 3* for information on the National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES), 1999 (Adult Education Survey).

Participation in Adult Learning

TableS7 Standard errors for the percentage of adults ages 18–44 who participated in credential or other types of learning programs in the past 12 months: 1999

Age	Credential program	All other activities
18-20	3.5	4.0
21-22	4.4	3.3
23-24	3.7	4.7
25-26	3.1	4.2
27-28	2.7	3.9
29-30	2.4	3.9
31-32	2.7	4.2
33-34	2.0	4.1
35-36	2.1	3.8
37-38	1.5	3.8
39-40	1.4	3.8
41-42	1.9	4.0
43-44	1.7	3.6

NOTE: Data have been revised from previously published figures.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES), 1999 (Adult Education Survey).

Participation in Adult Learning

Table S7-1 Standard errors for the percentage of adults age 18 and above who participated in learning activities in the past 12 months, by educational attainment and age: 1991, 1995, and 1999

Educational attainment and age	1991 Total	1995 Total	1999					
			Total	Type of adult learning activity				
				Basic skills	Credential		Work-related	Personal
					Full-time	Part-time		
Total	0.7	0.5	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.6	0.6
Educational attainment								
Grade 8 or less	1.5	1.1	2.8	2.2	–	0.4	0.6	2.3
Grades 9- 12	2.3	1.4	2.1	1.1	0.4	0.9	0.9	1.5
High school diploma or equivalent	1.1	0.8	1.5	0.3	0.5	0.6	1.2	1.3
Some college, including technical/vocational	1.9	0.7	1.3	0.2	0.9	0.9	1.2	1.2
Bachelor's degree or higher	2.0	1.0	1.4	–	0.5	0.8	1.3	1.2
Age								
18- 24	2.4	1.1	2.5	1.5	2.1	1.3	1.7	2.2
25- 34	2.0	0.9	2.0	0.5	0.8	1.1	1.8	1.6
35- 44	2.2	0.9	1.7	0.3	0.4	1.1	1.4	1.4
45- 54	2.2	1.2	2.1	0.3	0.4	0.9	1.5	1.5
55- 64	2.1	1.1	2.1	0.2	0.1	0.9	1.7	1.5
65 and above	1.3	1.0	1.1	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.6	1.1

— Not applicable.

NOTE: Data have been revised from previously published figures.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES), 1991, 1995, and 1999 (Adult Education Survey).

Table S7-2 Standard errors for the percentage of adults age 18 and above who participated in various learning activities with different providers, by type of activity: 1999

Type of activity	Type of provider for various adult learning activities						
	Elementary/ secondary	Post- secondary	Trade organization	Private organization	Business	Government	Other
Credential	0.5	1.6	1.0	0.4	0.9	0.7	0.7
Full-time	0.6	1.9	1.3	0.9	0.3	0.9	0.8
Part-time	0.7	2.2	1.5	0.5	1.5	1.1	0.9
Work-related	0.6	1.1	1.0	0.6	1.4	1.0	0.5
Personal	0.6	1.0	0.9	1.3	1.2	0.8	0.7

NOTE: Data have been revised from previously published figures.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES), 1999 (Adult Education Survey).